

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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FOLLOWING TEL MADRAS 1580 DTD 31 AUG 76 RCVD NEW DELHI

BEING REPEATED TO YOU. QUOTE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, IN

SUBJECT: 15 NAXALITES SENTENCED LIFE IMPRISONMENT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

1. ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS, 15 NAXALITES CHARGED IN THE PARVATHIP-

URAM CONSPIRACY CASE WERE SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT BY A SESSIONS JUDGE AT VISAKHAPATNAM ON AUGUST 30, WITH TWO OTHERS SENTENCED TO

FIVE YEARS RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT. ALL 17 WERE MEMBERS OF THE FAMOUS SRIKAKULAM NAXALITE GROUP WHICH WAS VERY ACTIVE DURING 1969-70 IN AN EFFORT TO EXTEND ITS BASE OF OPERATIONS TO THE WHOLE OF ANDHRA PRADESH

ORISSA, AND MADHYA PRADESH.

2. THOSE SENTENCED ARE FROM WEST BENGAL, ORISSA, AND ANDHRA PRADESH. PROMINENT AMONG THEM ARE KANU SANYAL AND SURIN BOSE FROM WEST BENGAL; NAGABHUSHANAM PATNAIK FROM ORISSA; CHOWDARY TEJESWARA RAO, HIS WIFE, AND KOLLA VENKAIAH FROM ANDHRA PRADESH. THE ORISSA LEADER, NAGABHUSHANAM PATNAIK, WAS EARLIER SENTENCED TO DEATH IN ANOTHER NAXALITE

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CASE, BUT HIS SENTENCE WAS COMMUTED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT BY THE PRESI-

DENT OF INDIA.

3. THE JUDGE FOUND ALL OF THE GROUP GUILTY OF CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY TO WAGE WAR AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AND TO OVERTHROW IT BY VIOLENT MEANS AND ALSO TO COMMIT OFFENSES OF MURDER AND DACOITY. THE MAGNITUDE OF THE CASE CAN BE APPRECIATED WHEN IT IS RECOGNIZED THAT THE CONVICTED WERE INVOLVED IN 36 MURDER CASES, 76 DACOITIES, 96 ATTACKS ON THE POLICE, AND 16 OTHER OFFENSES. 5: WITNESSES FROM WEST BENGAL, ORISSA, MAHARASHTRA, AND MADHYA PRADESH, TAMIL NADU, AND ANDHRA PRADESH WERE EXAMINED AND 1,080 DOCUMENTS WERE EXHIBITED. THE TRIAL WAS CONDUCTED BY A SPECIALLY CONSTITUTED COURT FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

4. COMMENT: THE CONVICTED HAVE BEEN IN DETENTION FOR THE PAST 6 YEARS AND THE TRIAL HAS TAKEN OVER TWO YEARS. IT IS SOMETIMES DIFFICULT

TO PROVE CHARGES AGAINST POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND IN THIS CASE THE POLICE SUCCEEDED IN OBTAINING CONVICTIONS ONLY AFTER CONSIDERABLE EFFORT. THE SRIKAKULAM NAXALITE EXPERIMENT NOW APPEARS TO BE FINISHED LEGALLY, AFTER HAVING BEEN BROKEN POLITICALLY I.E.971-72.

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